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INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 0691  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHNO/USDELMC BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/USNMR SHAPE BE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 000015

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: NATO/IRAQ: NTM-I CORE COUNTRIES SHARE CONCERNS OF  
DENMARK AND PORTUGAL

REF: A. USNATO 09  
[1](#)B. USNATO 06  
[1](#)C. BAGHDAD 72

Classified By: Ambassador Charge Bruce Weinrod for reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (C) The backbone countries in the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I) share similar concerns about the legal status of the NTM-I as Denmark and Portugal (Ref A), both of which are withdrawing from the mission (Denmark until the legal status can be clarified, but Portugal permanently.). Poland said without a short-term endorsement from the GOI on NTM-I's legal issues during NATO's upcoming trip to Baghdad, it may withdraw its 17-person contribution to NTM-I. Poland had planned an inter-agency meeting on January 19 to discuss possible expansion of its contribution to NTM-I but has shelved those plans until the legal status issues can be resolved. More focused on the long-term, Italy said it had "a few" months to work out a durable solution, but would withdraw its 75 trainers if a long-term solution was not in place well before the EOL expires (July 31). The other large contributor, the UK, has its own bilateral agreement with Iraq.

[1](#)2. (C) The GOI has postponed the NATO negotiating team's trip to Baghdad that had been scheduled for next week until the first week of February at the soonest. In the short-term, Poland and Italy expect the NATO negotiating team to receive Iraqi clarifications of the GOI/NATO exchange of letters (EOL). USNATO will urge nervous Allies to be patient, but this virtue is in short supply. NATO is now focusing on an EOL that extends the specific legal protections required by Allies, rather than stating that NTM-I would have equal status with the U.S. SOFA. This plan seems sound, but a short-term solution is essential to stop NTM-I's hemorrhaging. NATO negotiators will need to secure some endorsement of the December NATO/GOI EOL and clarifications on Allies' main legal questions from its upcoming negotiations with the GOI to shore up Allies.

WEINROD